

Fingerings for alto recorder

The following fingerings are derived from a 31-note alto recorder chart of fingerings compiled by Rick Lilienthal in January 1984. Ian Shanahan has provided some further fingerings, which in some cases are technically and musically more successful. In both cases, fingerings were obtained on a Moeck Rottenburgh alto recorder (a popular, high quality instrument with modern bore characteristics, the exterior of the instrument only being a replica of one by Rottenburgh). Naturally, for other sizes and/or makes of recorder, one may need to modify the fingerings in order to give the same results. The tuning of the notes is quite sensitive, requiring much careful listening and complete familiarity with the behaviour of each instrument for perfect results.

Fingering Tablature

- (a) ○ = open fingerhole
- (b) ∅ = slight shading of the fingerhole (almost completely open)
- (c) ◐, ◑ = fingerhole approximately half open
- (d) ◒ = "pinched" thumbhole (thumbhole vented in order to facilitate the performance of 2nd- and higher-register notes).
- (e) ◓ = slight venting of the fingerhole (almost completely closed)
- (f) ● = closed fingerhole
- (g) [] = an optional procedure which may be necessary on some instruments

(h) N = standard or common alternate fingering employed in 12-note music for recorder

RL, IS = fingerings provided by Rick Lilienthal and Ian Shanahan, respectively

Note that the precise amount of fingerhole closure in (b) to (e) above will vary from fingering to fingering and instrument to instrument, even though the same tablature symbol is used. That is, fingering tablatures with these symbols are always approximate: given fingerings are relative and not absolute. In each chart below, the first fingering to appear for a given pitch is the one most favoured in the performance of the piece the chart refers to. Each fingering for a given pitch yields different dynamic and/or timbral results. This is a crucial consideration in the choice of fingerings, as, for example, the timbre of a particular fingering may be used to mask or enhance the perception of a small pitch-change as in the many single diesis steps which occur in the following pieces: for example, compare the effect of going from D natural to D half-sharp by using the first and then the second D natural fingering in conjunction with the first D half-sharp fingering (here the related timbres generated by related fingerings tend to obscure the pitch-change, and vice-versa). Similarly, a sudden dynamic change resulting from the choice of a particular fingering may be inappropriate musically. Finally, it is interesting to realize that separate fingerings are given for notes regarded as being equivalent in 12-note equal temperament (e.g. C sharp and D flat) here, a practice which was prevalent in the fingering charts of Renaissance and Baroque recorder treatises!

(1) 31st Night (or what you will)

Dieses: 1 4 4 1 1 1 1 5 1 3

Handwritten musical notation for '31st Night'. The staff contains the following notes: $\flat o$, $\sharp o$, $\flat o$, $\sharp o$, $\sharp o$, $\flat o$, $\flat o$, $\flat o$, $\flat o$, $\sharp o$, $\flat o$, $\sharp o$. Below the staff are 14 dot patterns, each with a label underneath. The labels are: N, IS, RL, [N], [N], IS, RL, RL, N, IS, IS, IS, RL, N, N, N, RL. Some dot patterns include brackets or other markings.

Dieses: 1 3

Handwritten musical notation for a short piece. The staff contains the following notes: $\sharp o$, $\sharp o$, $\flat o$. Below the staff are three dot patterns, each with a label underneath: RL, RL, RL.

(2) The Swing

Dieses: | | | | || | || |

as above as above as above as above IS IS RL RL as above N(B¹ 12 e.t.) RL

PITCH SYSTEM: C^h C[#] C[#] D^b D^b D^h

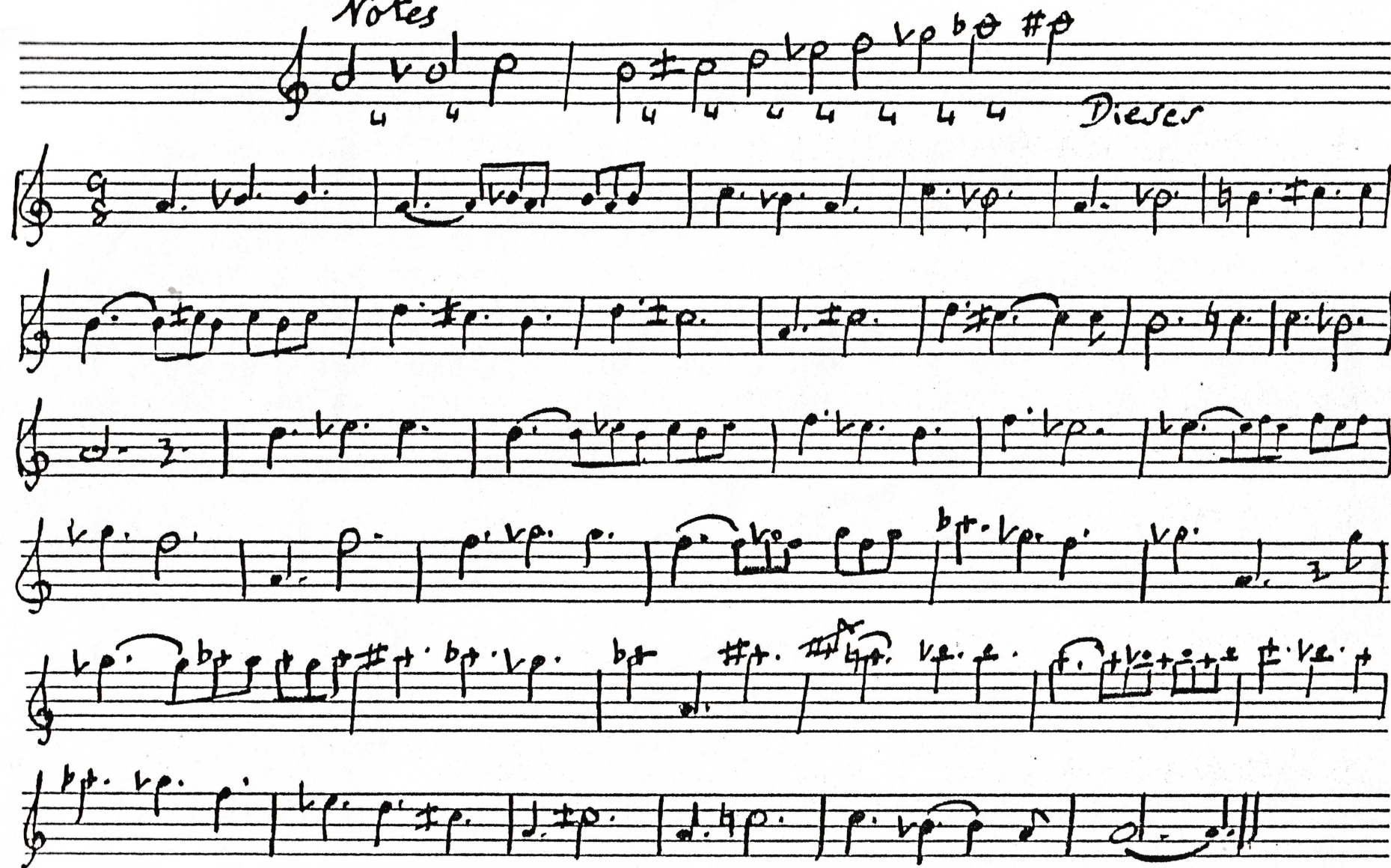
↑ C^{"1/2 sharp"} C sharp D flat D^{"1/2 flat"}

1 diesis sharp 2 diesis sharp 3 diesis sharp from C^h 4 diesis sharp from C^h

1 diesis flat from D^h

8. Minor Tone melody

Notes



9.

The Swing ~ Perfect Fourth and Diesis.

60 steps of one Diesis.

tr fing. Notes used

Recorder fingering

N = normal fingering (12 tone)

N

N